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LITHUANIA

Facts Supporting Her Claim
for Reestablishment as an
Independent Nation

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PREFACE

The present war began through a ruthless attempt to override the rights of a small Nation—Serbia. It took its present form through a further invasion of the rights of another small Nation—Belgium. Certain it is that this war will have been fought in vain if the rights of small Nations everywhere are not established and safeguarded by the treaty of peace which Allied victory will impose.

The basis of delimitation for small Nations is not easy to find; for neither race, nor tongue, nor religion can alone be considered; nor is numerical preponderance upon the soil always to be taken as a chief factor. Happy, therefore, in the light of the new day that is dawning, is that small Nation whose blood, language, faith and geographic situation combine to establish its cartographic form unmistakably.

Such a people are the Lithuanians, whose proudest boast of national self-assertion throughout long generations of severe repression has been the preservation of their language amidst a flood of linguistic corruption, of their faith against the most fanatical of hostile proselytization, and of their traditions in the face of the most rigorous of official cruelty. To them at length the shifting fortunes of war have brought the definite opportunity for the realization of their national ideals of freedom and of progress. The Russian *débacle* has delivered them from the hand of Russian only to pass them beneath the yoke of the Hun. That they can remain there is as unthinkable as that Belgium shall not be delivered and restored. That they can be returned to Muscovite mastery is equally unbelievable in view of the tragedies which the past year has brought forth in every quarter where the White Czar once ruled. That they shall be given the opportunity to regain their ancient estate and their one-time glory is the only course which statesmen who think in just terms of the future can approve.

To summarize the equitable demands of this people and to enlighten the American mind—which we needs must think will be the controlling force at the peace conference table—this little brochure has been prepared. Its statements are fully authenticated, its conclusions are fully warranted. That it will succeed in its mission is the earnest hope of all who have studied the past and who believe in the future of the small Nations of the world.

GEORGE H. MOSES,

Former American Minister to Greece.

Concord, New Hampshire, 14 June, 1918.

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INTRODUCTORY

One of the vital problems which must be solved if the World War is to end wars is that of nationalities—the admittance of all living nations to the Family of Nations. The importance of the proper settlement of this question cannot be too strongly emphasized.

Prof. Michels, in his invaluable work, *Political Parties*, says: “The principle of nationality was discovered for the solution of the racial and linguistic problem, which, unsolved, has continually threatened Europe with war and the majority of individual states with revolution. Finally the principle of self-government, the corner-stone of democracy, has come to be regarded as furnishing a solution of the problem of nationality, for the principle of nationality entails in practical working the acceptance of the idea of popular government. The importance of the principle of nationality is undeniable, and most of the national questions of Western Europe can be and ought to be solved in accordance with this principle; but matters are complicated by geographical and strategic frontiers; moreover, the principle of nationality cannot help us where nationalities can hardly be said to exist, or where they are intertangled in inextricable confusion.”¹

President Wilson in his memorable message to Congress, February 11, 1918, stated that this Great European War “had its roots in the disregard of the rights of small nations and of nationalities which lacked the union and the force to make good their claim to determine their own allegiance and their own forms of political life.” This great statesman sees that one important stride toward a lasting peace is the recognition of the principle of nationalities, and that the settlement of all disputes involved in this war must give high consideration to this principle. He says further:

“Every territorial settlement involved in this war must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned, and not as a part of any mere adjustment or compromise of claims amongst rival states; and that all well defined national aspirations shall be accorded the utmost satisfaction that can be accorded them

¹“Political Parties,” by R. Michels, Professor of Political Economy and Statistics, University of Basle.

without introducing new or perpetuating old elements of discord and antagonism that would be likely in time to break the peace of Europe and consequently of the world."

It has been said only the living, organized nations should be considered as candidates for the Family of Nations, many grouped nationalities are hardly conscious of their being, and are submerged by the dominating influence of powerful nations to which they are related.

On the other hand there are several nations, which, although surrounded by other more powerful nations and forced in many contemptible ways to abandon their national aspirations, have succeeded, under grave difficulties, in retaining not only their national life, but also have been active in forming numerous educational, political and economical institutions. While slowly and gradually advancing, they are always keen to seize every opportunity making toward liberation from foreign domination.

Many of these nations differ greatly, racially and linguistically, from those under whose rule they are forced to live, and, unless they are granted the right of self-government, there always will be friction between nations. This has been demonstrated in European countries by countless uprisings for emancipation. Such conditions, obviously, menace the peace of the world.

This booklet treats of one of these oppressed nations—Lithuania—its history, the legal aspects of its ancient treaties and its aspirations for the future.

LITHUANIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL.

LITHUANIAN ETHNOGRAPHY

Lithuania is situated in the basin of the Nemunas (Niemen), and the Dauguva (Dvina) rivers, on the southeast coast of the Baltic¹ Sea.

Ethnographic Lithuania corresponds to the following administrative divisions, which were once part of Russian Czardom: the governments of Vilna, Kovna, Suvalki, Grodno, a part of Courland, and the governments of Minsk and Vitebsk; also the provinces in East Prussia known as Tilze (Tilsit), Klaipeda (Memel), Gumbine (Gumbinen), and Karaliaucius (Koenigsberg).

The city of Vilnius (Vilna) is the capital of Lithuania.

The area which ethnographical Lithuania occupies is approximately 80,000 square miles.² The population is about 9,000,000, of which 7,000,000 are Lithuanians (3,500,000 Lithuanian proper; 1,500,000 Lithuanians using Slavic dialect; and 2,000,000 Letts), and 308,444 Poles.³ The rest of the population consists of Jews, White Russians, Germans, Mongols and others.⁴

ORIGIN

Lithuanians are autochthonously related to the territory above outlined. There is no trace in the world's history of any other people having lived in these regions. This is confirmed by anthropological researches.

The Lithuanian people, although situated between the Slavs and Teutons, are in no way related to them. The Lithuanian race forms a separate branch, springing up side by side with other races having an Indo-European origin. The people are divided into five stocks; Lithuanians proper, Samogitians, Letts,⁵ Jatvingiai and

¹From the Lithuanian word "baltas"—white.

²L. Dominian, "Frontiers of Languages and Nationalities in Europe," 1917.

³"United States Immigration Committee, report of 1910."

⁴Concerning the description of Lithuania, the customs of her people, and real life in Lithuania, consult "The Spectator," January-June, 1885; also "Littell's Living Age," April 18, 1885.

⁵Describing the differences between the Lithuanians and the Letts, a long article was published by C. H. Wright, LL. D., in "The Edinburgh Review," October, 1917. See also "The International Studio," September, 1916, regarding the Lettish art. "The Arena," October, 1908, tells of Letts in the United States.

Parusians (Prussians). At present only the first three stocks exist. The last two were partly assimilated by the wave of Teutons and Slavs.

Prof. Ripley writes:

"Entirely distinct from the Slavs are the Letto-Lithuanian people, which, to the number of three million or more, occupies the territory between the White Russians and the Baltic Sea, extending down into Northern Prussia. Their speech in the comparative isolation of this inhospitable region—an isolation which made them the last people in Europe to accept Christianity—is the most archaic member of the great Aryan or inflectional family. Standing between Slavic and Teutonic, it is more primitive than either. Three tribes or peoples of them co-exist here; Letts, Samogitians and Lithuanians proper.

"The head, form and facial proportions of the purest of the Letto-Lithuanians, it will be observed, approximate quite closely to our Anglo-Saxon model.

"If our original Finns are proved to be long-headed blondes, oftentimes very tall; if the Letto-Lithuanians, contrasted with the Russian Slavs, betray the same physical tendencies; if just across the Baltic Sea, the main center of this peculiar racial combination is surely located in Scandinavia; and, finally, if in every direction from the Baltic Sea, whether east across Russia, or south into Germany, these traits vanish into the broader-headed, darker-complexioned, medium-statured, and stocky Alpine (Celtic?) type, how can we longer deny that the Finns, Letto-Lithuanians and Teutons are all offshoots from the same trunk? A direct physical relationship between the three, referring them all to the so-called Nordic race, is confirmed by the very latest and most competent authority (Canon Taylor, Kohn, and Mellis, Bogdanof)."¹

¹"The Races of Europe," by Professor W. Z. Ripley, Ph. D., lecturer of anthropology at the Columbia University.

"Zur Anthropologie der Litauer," Isidorus Brennssohn, Derpat, 1883.

LANGUAGE¹

The Lithuanian people speak one of the oldest languages of the world. This tongue strikingly resembles Sanscrit, a language which in no way resembles that of their neighbors, the Slavs and Germans. Although it was surrounded by foreign (Russian, German and Polish) influences, nevertheless, it has preserved its purity and beauty. In richness the Lithuanian is only equalled by the English language (75,000 words, according to Fortunatoff).

Mr. Lees writes:

"Harmonious, richer in affectionate and cajoling diminutives than any other of the languages of Europe, Lithuanian possesses the sonority of Latin and Greek; the primitive qualities of Sanscrit; and the softness and musicality of Italian. So well have some of the primitive characteristics of this beautiful language been preserved in the undisturbed backwaters of Lithuania, that, if it were possible for the Romans and the Greeks to rise from their graves, they would have little difficulty in understanding whole sentences as spoken by the Lithuanian today, whilst these could just as easily understand some of the phrases of the Sanscrit.

"*'Vyr'ai, traukite jungan,'* uttered the Lithuanian refugee sadly, as he shouldered his pack and fled before the German invader (1915). *'Viri trahite jugum'*—*'Men, drag the yoke'*—echoed the Roman.

"*'Dzievs (Dievs) dave dautis, duos ir duonos'*—*'God has given us teeth, he will give us bread'*—continued the refugee resignedly, though his farm was in flames and all hope of return to his ravaged fields seemed gone forever. And from ancient Greece came the encouraging response: *'Dzeus doe odontas dosei sitos'.*"²

¹"The Academy," September 22, 1883. "The Reizenberger's Studies in Lithuanian," by Jane Lee. Also the same magazine, October 28, 1882. "The Lithuanian Popular Songs," by John T. Naake.

Pietro G. Goidánich, "L'origine e le forme della dittongazione romanza." Halle, 1907.

R. Gauthiot, "Le parler de Buividze; essai de description d'un dialecte lituanien oriental." Paris, 1903.

F. Kurshat, "Grammatik der Litauischen Sprache." Halle, 1876.

G. F. Nesselman, "Wörterbuch der litauischen sprache," Königsberg.

A. Schlieger, "Handbuch der litauischen sprache," Prag, 1856.

W. Gaigalat, "Die Wolfenbütteler litauische postillenhandschrift aus dem jahre 1573." Tilsit, 1900.

Ch. Donalitus, "Litauische dichtungun."

²"The Contemporary Review," August, 1917.

The Lithuanian language plays a very important role in the field of philology, as a key to the ancient Sanscrit. The authorities quoted below speak of its importance in this respect.

C. H. Wright, referring to the Lithuanian and Lettish languages, says: "In 1837 Patt demonstrated that the Letto-Lithuanic languages form an independent group—the Baltic family—which should be placed next to the Slavonic and Germanic families in regard to independence, and before them with regard to antiquity.

"Later philologists, without exception, have confirmed this view. A. Meillet, for instance, confirms the simple truth that no Slav could understand a word of Lettish or Lithuanian. Nevertheless, certain politicians have not hesitated to proclaim the Letts and the Lithuanians as Slavs."¹

In Elise Reclus *Geographic Universelle*, it is stated:

"Of all European languages, the Lithuanian has the greatest number of affectionate and diminutives—more than the Spanish or Italian, even the Russian—and they can be multiplied almost indefinitely by adding them to verbs and adverbs as well as to adjectives and nouns. If the value of a nation in the total sum of humanity were to be measured by the beauty of its language, the Lithuanians ought to have the first place among the nations of Europe."

Prof. Meillet of the College de France, says: "If you wish to hear from human lips some echo of what the language originally common to the Indo-European may have been, go and listen to Lithuanian peasants talking."

DEVELOPMENT

Compared with other nations, very little can be found about Lithuania in foreign literature. Even that is widely scattered through volumes printed in different languages. Notwithstanding, archeological discoveries show ancient Lithuania to have possessed a high state of culture. It is stated between the years 3000 and 1500 B. C., agriculture in Lithuania was developed to a high degree.²

According to S. Mueller, C. Montelius and others, during the Iron Period (100-400 years B. C.) Lithuanian culture was astonish-

¹ "The Edinburgh Review," October, 1917.

² "Prussia," 1909. Heft 22, p. 502.

ing. Various kinds of weapons were manufactured from metal; ornaments from amber and other substances. Already the spinning and weaving of clothes were in progress. Tischler and other archeologists write extensively of the highly developed Lithuanian culture from the beginning of the Christ period to the coming of the Crusaders into Lithuania.¹

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

It can hardly be determined whether, up to the tenth century, there was a political organization in Lithuania or not. There probably was not. However, the people were united by one religion, a common language and the same customs.²

Constant attacks by enemies forced them to form closer and closer ties among themselves. They organized in groups under the leadership of their own Rykiai (commanders). Later on, several of these groups united and chose one Kunigaikstis (Prince). One of these princes, whose name appears in history, was Rimgaudas. Still later all these groups were united under one leader, forming the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Mr. Bain says:

"Lithuanians first emerged into the light of history at the time of the settlement of the Teutonic Order in the North. Rumors of the war of extermination, waged by the Knights against their near kinsfolk, the Prussians, first evoked the Lithuanians to a sense of their danger. They immediately abandoned their loose communal system for a monarchical form of government, and under a series of exceptionally capable Princes, notably, Mindovg (1240-1263), and Gedymin (1316-1341), began an astonishing career of conquest, mainly at the expense of Russia, so that at the death of Gedymin, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania extended from Courland to the Carpathians, and from the Bug to the Desna, including the old Russian principalities of Plock, Kiev and Chernigov. Indeed, at one time, it seemed as if this new, non-Slavonic State was about to eclipse and absorb all the Slavonic states to the East and West.³

¹A. Rambaud, "Histoire de la Russie depuis origines jusqu'a nos jours." Paris, 1914.

²Ostpreusens, p. 7; and "Prussia" 1901. Heft 21, p. 66.

³R. N. Bain, "Slavonic Europe."

CHRISTIANITY IN LITHUANIA

Lithuania was the last nation of Europe to embrace Christianity. Towards the end of the thirteenth century an attempt was made to force upon her the Christian belief by the sword and violence. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, two German military orders, the Order of the Teutonic Knights of the Cross and the Order of the Sword Bearers, had settled near the frontiers of Lithuania. The former at the mouth of the Vistula, and the latter at the mouth of the Dvina. Under pretext of converting Lithuania to Christianity, they endeavored to subjugate the country. The Lithuanians fought for two centuries to defend their liberty and their homes.

Not being consolidated at that time by a complete union of all their branches under a single government, the Lithuanian people had great difficulty in resisting the crusades undertaken against them. The knights of all Europe rushed into Prussia in order to fight the heathen Lithuanians for their souls' salvation. Not only the knights, but also the kings with their entire armies, descended upon this peaceful people. It will suffice to name the case of Ottokar, King of Bohemia, who, in 1254-1255 came to Prussia with an army of 60,000 men to fight the heathens there, together with the Teutonic Knights of the Cross. It was not a war to convert the people to Christianity, but a war of conquest and of extermination.

This war of plunder and extermination, undertaken in the name of Christ by the Knights of the Cross, inspired in the Lithuanians a feeling of hatred, not only towards the Teutonic Knights, but also towards the Christian faith.

The ancient Lithuanians naturally identified Christianity with bondage. It is, therefore, not astonishing that they should have refused, until the thirteenth century, to accept Christianity from the hands of their worst enemies who sought to subdue them.

The *Dublin University Magazine*, November, 1869, says:

"The Knights felt that if Lithuania was Christian, there would be no more 'pagan hordes' for them to make head against, and so they were not at all anxious that the pure faith should make way across the Niemen. They were always ready, however, to foment disorders in the country.

"The Teutonic Knights were slowly preparing to annex Lithu-

ania; they did not hurry themselves, for they liked to keep, as long as possible, a miniature crusading ground, where all the enthusiasts of Europe might carry on the war against the infidels, with a minimum of danger and a maximum of profit.”¹

THE KINGDOM OF LITHUANIA

Prince Mindaugis (Mindovg), seeing that the constant attacks on the Lithuanians under the pretext of Christianity were threatening her freedom, decided to place Lithuania on equal basis with other civilized European States. He was the first to unite Lithuania into one body politic, thereby forming the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

In 1250, he invited Andrews, the Grand Master of the Sword Bearers of Riga, to his palace in Varuta, and after a conference with him, Mindaugis decided to accept the Christian faith. A year later, he, his wife Martha, his two sons Rukelis and Repeikis and the entire court were baptized, their example being followed by the princes and other Lithuanian nobility.

After the baptism, Mindaugis sent a delegation to the Pope, Innocentius IV, expressing his filial devotion to the Holy See and asking the Pope to take him under his paternal care as a separate son of the Church, meaning that Christian Lithuania should not be part of the Polish or Teutonic bishopric, but that such bishopric should be established in Lithuania. The delegation was headed by Pornius, one of the brilliant military leaders. The delegation was received by the Pope at the city of Mediolano.

Together with the Lithuanian delegation, there were also the delegates of Grand Master Andrews, asking the Pope for permission to crown Mindaugis King of Lithuania. The delegates were received with open arms and their requests granted.

The same day, July 17, 1251, the Pope Innocentius issued a paper to Henrick, Bishop of Cholm, commanding him to officiate at the coronation of Mindaugis as King of Lithuania.

Orders were also issued to other bishops that they should not interfere with Lithuania and Mindaugis as a separate son of the Church; no doubt the Pope had in mind Albert, Arch-bishop of Riga, who was opposing the creation of a bishopric in Lithuania. The coronation was performed by the Bishop Henrick in July, 1253. The

¹F. Boldt, “Der Deutsche orden und Litauen.”

ceremonies were witnessed by many foreign and Lithuanian dignitaries. Christian, the future bishop of Lithuania, was also present.

Such a radical change in the religious faith of the rulers of Lithuania brought some disorders in the country, because the people at first were unable to understand the causes leading to the changes. But the tact and firmness of the newly crowned King Mindaugis restored harmony and order in Lithuania. His services to the country were praised for centuries, particularly since he was the first to inculcate the idea of maintaining one political body in Lithuania.

While Mindaugis was preparing to strike the Teutonic Order a hard blow (1263), he was assassinated by enemy agents.

PERIOD OF THE STRENGTH OF LITHUANIA

After the death of Mindaugis, although the kingdom of Lithuania was again divided by the princes, the idea of unity still maintained, and as the Teutonic pressure increased, Lithuania was reunited by Vitenis, and subsequently taken over by Gedeminas (Gedemin), the Grand Duke of Lithuania (1316-1341).

In spite of the official conversion of Lithuania to Christianity, the Teutonic Knights did not cease to devastate the country, and hence, after the death of Mindaugis, paganism regained the upper hand in Lithuania. The successors of Mindaugis were able not only to resist the advance of the Teutonic Knights in the East, but they also conquered vast Slavo-Ruthenian regions. For instance, King Gedeminas conquered Volhynia and Kiev, while fighting in the West against the Germans.

King Gedeminas laid the foundation of the power of the Lithuanian state, not only through conquest, but also through the internal organization of occupied territories. He was one of the most remarkable Lithuanian sovereigns. His successors continued his policy of expansion towards the East, and his defensive policy towards the Teutonic Knights in the West. Two of his sons, Algirdas and Keistutis (1345-1377), inflicted a defeat on the Teutonic Knights at Rudava (East Prussia), and thus forced them to keep away from the frontiers of Lithuania. At the same time the Lithuanian princes drove back the Tartars as far as Crimea after the battle of the Blue Waters. During this epoch Lithuania extended from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea.

The Contemporary Review, of August, 1917, says:

"The great historical past of the Lithuanians appeals very strongly to both historian and politician. But as regards their political history, which is complicated in the extreme, I need not do much more than point out how great a service they rendered Europe when, on the one hand, they delivered the greater part of Russia from the yoke of the Mongols, whilst, on the other, they raised Poland to the rank of a Great Power and stemmed the *Drang nach Osten* of the Teutonic Knights."

At the time of Gedeminas, Lithuania was at the height of her greatness. Then it was that great services were rendered to Western Europe through checking the wave of Tartar hordes which most certainly would have destroyed European civilization while in its very cradle.

The death of Gedeminas brought about the division of Lithuania, but, says Phillips ("Poland"), "in 1345, it was reunited by agreement among his sons. Olgierd, who had been baptized into the Orthodox faith, was recognized as Grand Prince of Lithuania and reigned till his death, from his capital at Vilna, over an empire which embraced all the present western provinces of Russia."

While Algirdas (Olgierd) ruled Lithuania (1345-1377), his brother, Keistutis, was ruler of Zemaitija (Samogitia). They were acting in unison, and successfully carried on the wars against the Tartars, Poles, Teutonic Order and the Moscovites.

Although Lithuania was forced to wage wars with Christian nations, it was only because there were people in certain parts of the country who had not as yet adopted the Christian faith, and, under the pretext of converting them, the neighboring nations frequently attempted to cross the border, thereby challenging the Lithuanian people to fight for their liberty.

Nevertheless, "Lithuania was not wholly shut out from the Brotherhood of Nations; its Princes began to marry Christian wives, and they allowed them free exercise of their religion, though they vigorously checked the proselytizing of the Franciscans; Olgierd (Algirdas) and Keystutt (Keistutis), father and uncle of the Jagello (Jagela), sent embassies as far as the Pope at Avignon, and even over to England; and their policy must have been sagacious or they would not have been able to resist the Teutonic Knights, to roll

back the tide of Tartar invasion, and to push their conquests as far south as Kiev.

"Olgierd aimed at conquering the Crimea, and getting an outlet to the Black Sea. Once, he almost took Moscow, only sparing it in deference to the prayers of the Grand Duke Demetrius. When he had decided on drawing off his army, he rode up to the city, and, breaking his lance against the gate, he said: 'Demetrius Ivanovitch, never forget that the Lithuanian spear has struck the gate of Moscow.'

"Keystutt, Olgierd's brother, was a prince in an age when, according to the German Minnesingers, the Christian Knights were losing all title to the name, yea, were spoiling the trade of the Jew usurers. Often taken prisoner by the Teutonic Knights, he usually owed his escape to the admiration which he inspired in his gaolers. Once, after eight months' captivity he got away in the dress of the order, the well known white cloak with black cross, and on the horse of the Grand Master himself; but he took care to send back the horse as soon as he crossed the frontier. He was as magnanimous in victory, as he was intrepid in defeat. Here is an instance of this crude heathen's conduct:

"Johannisburg has just been taken by a night attack; the 'white cloaks' have surrendered; they are packed in the courtyard of the castle while round them streams a crowd of people clad in sheepskins, brandishing their bows and arrows, and calling for vengeance and for a wholesale sacrifice to Znicz.¹ Although the commander of the Knights steps forward, 'Son of Gedimin,' he says, 'I am ready to die, but spare my comrades!' 'Choose the four of them, whom you love best, and ride freely off; as for the rest, they shall all have their lives; Keystutt hath said it.'

"He always duly warned the Grand Master before he made any inroad on the Knights; and (adds the chronicler), 'when he said he was coming, he always came.'"²

POLISH INTRIGUE

After the death of Algirdas, his son Jagela (Jagello) became the Grand Duke of Lithuania.

The Poles seeing Lithuania powerful and flourishing, were

¹Zinycia, the sanctuary of the highest God, Perkunas-thunder.

²"Dublin University Magazine," November, 1869.

anxious to gain her alliance against the Teutonic Order, "who were fast losing any religious character they might have possessed and continued a fighting force as efficient as it was cruel." They offered Jagela the crown of Poland and the hand of Jadwiga, then the young queen of Poland.

In 1386, Jagela married Jadwiga and became King of Poland. The intention of the Polish nobility was clear. By forcing their young queen into a matrimonial bond with the Grand Duke of Lithuania, they expected that these two states would become united. Jagela persuaded by Poles, through Jadwiga, tried to form a closer tie between Poland and Lithuania, by pretending to be the ruler of both states while sitting in Cracow, the Polish capital.

The actions of Jagela insulted the people of Lithuania who were bitterly opposed to any political relations with Poland. At the head of the dissatisfied population of Lithuania was Vytautas (Vytovt), cousin of Jagela. Jagela immediately sent a Polish army to suppress the uprisings in Lithuania. Soon he found that he was powerless against the Lithuanians, and could no longer occupy two thrones. He then called the Diet of Ostrove (1392), where he was compelled to transfer the throne of Lithuania to Vytautas. At this Diet, the Lithuanian Grand Duke was declared to be the equal in all respects to the Polish King. Both states promised to assist each other in case of war with the Teutonic Order, or Tartars.

DRASTIC STEPS ARE TAKEN

The Poles, feeling the growing strength of Lithuania, compelled Jadwiga to remind Vytautas of the Krevo "union" of 1385, in which Jagela promised to join Lithuania with Poland, and obligated Lithuania to pay assessments to Poland. This was too much of an insult to Vytautas. He at once called together all the princes and nobility of Lithuania and Gudia (White Russia), presented the letter from Jadwiga, and, in irony, asked them if they were willing to comply with Jadwiga's request. As was to be expected, there was only one answer: "Our forefathers never paid assessments to Poles, neither will we pay." This was in harmony with the views of Vytautas.

The ambition of Vytautas was to make the title of Lithuania equal to that of Poland. Foreseeing serious objections from the

Polish side, he proceeded at once with preparations for war with Poland. On November 2nd, 1398, all the nobility were summoned to a conference. The Grand Master of the Crusaders was also invited to attend. He promised Vytautas his assistance against the Poles. At this conference, the Lithuanian and Gudian nobility present proclaimed Vytautas the King of Lithuania. This clearly indicates the spirit which predominated among the people of Lithuania, and what feelings they had towards Poland.

VYTAUTAS THE GREAT

War with Poland was prevented by the conflict of 1399 with the Tartars, and also by the Diet of Vilnius (Vilna), 1401. During the following nine years, Vytautas gained the upper hand over Tartars, Smolensk, Pskov, Novgorod and Moscovites. All these were bound to obey him.

During the reign of Vytautas, Lithuania attained the summit of her power. Her borders were enlarged to the north as far as Novgorod, to the east as far as Moscow and the Don. To the southwest she had as frontiers the River Dniester and the Black Sea.

Vytautas the Great rendered immense service to Western Europe by checking the invasion of the Tartars and other barbaric people. The Tartars of the Crimea were subdued by him to such an extent that they considered him as their suzerain. It was Vytautas who elected their Khans. This prince was as valiant a warrior as he was a clever diplomat. His genius may be compared with that of Charlemagne and Washington.

As to the characteristics of Vytautas as a ruler, the following quotation may throw a little light on the subject:

"Certain Poles were present one day at an execution; two criminals were set to hang themselves, and one urged the other on with the words, 'Let us make haste, the Prince is growing impatient.'"¹

The battle of Tennenberg, or Grunwald, in 1410, where the Teutonic Order received a mortal blow, marks an epoch in the world's history. This historic conflict was won by Vytautas, who

¹"Dublin University Magazine," 1869. This happened while Vytautas was preparing his army to the battle. Two of his soldiers made some utterance against God, and were condemned to die.

prepared not only his own Lithuanian troops, but the Polish armies under the leadership of Jagela as well.

Vytautas increased his ranks with a large number of Bohemian mercenaries. He was the active commander on the battlefield. As a consequence of this glorious victory, through Vytautas' strategy, the name of Lithuania and its ruler were praised throughout the whole of civilized Europe. It was then that Emperor Sigismund offered a king's crown to Vytautas. Since that time he has been called Vytautas the Great.¹

ALLIANCE WITH POLAND

Polish intrigues, due to jealousy of the rising glory of Lithuania, resulted in the Gardelis (Horodlo) Diet of 1413, for the purpose of forming a union between these two states. Although it was formed as an alliance for mutual protection, nevertheless the Poles, fearing that Vytautas might refuse even such a treaty, agreed to declare the Lithuanian Grand Duke equal in all respects to the Polish King.² It was also declared that after the death of either ruler, a successor would be chosen only after an agreement of both States.

Vytautas the Great did not leave direct heirs to the throne. Partisans of Jagela profited by this fact and endeavored to restore the throne of Lithuania to the dynasty of the Jagellons. The Poles tried to take advantage of this circumstance to draw the country little by little under their influence. The remaining heathens of Lithuania having been converted to Christianity, and other influences, under the cover of religion, penetrated into Lithuania at the same time. The Poles tried to propagate their language, their customs and their institutions in Lithuania. The laymen, following the clergy, entered the country in great numbers. The Jagellons and their partisans attempted to establish a political union between Poland and Lithuania, stronger than the doubtful alliance.

¹"Dublin University Magazine," November, 1869. Although the long article published in this magazine contains historical facts flavoured with Polish Chauvinism, nevertheless, it is worth reading, as it gives many interesting details concerning the struggles between the Lithuanians, Teutonic Knights and the Poles.

²Bain, "Slavonic Europe."

"States which are sovereign are necessarily equal in rights, since the quality of full sovereignty has no degrees, and the state, as such, has certain rights from its very existence."—T. D. Woolsey, "International Law," p. 36.

The Lithuanians did not cease to oppose the reconciliation with Poland, for the Lithuanian patriots realized that this could not take place except to the detriment of Lithuania. Several attempts on the side of the Poles to form a political union with Lithuania proved futile.

Although it was declared that the Grand Duke of Lithuania was the equal of the King of Poland, still the title at that time made much difference. So Vytautas decided to equalize the title as well. The Emperor Sigismund sent the crown to Vytautas, but Polish thieves attacked the envoys and stole it.¹

ANNULMENT OF THE UNION

After the death of Vytautas (1430), the agreement of Gardelis (1413) was annulled by the Lithuanians. They elected Svidrigaila to the throne of Lithuania without the consent of the Poles, and in spite of Polish opposition.

In 1432, Sigismund succeeded to the throne of Lithuania and tried to renew the earlier agreement with the Poles. But after his death, the Lithuanians again nullified all the existing agreements, by electing Casimir (1440) as Grand Duke of Lithuania. Several years later, the Poles invited Casimir to the throne of Poland, but he was "by no means disposed to exchange an absolute sway in his beloved Grand Duchy, for a relatively limited authority in a kingdom which he had never visited. Only after exasperating negotiations, only after the Poles had threatened him with a rival in Boleslaus, Prince of Mosovia, would Casimir give way. Then he stipulated that the disputed border province of Volhynia and Podolia should previously be adjusted."² Even after his coronation at Cracow (June, 1447), he continued to spend the greater part of his time in Lithuania. For the next seven years he quietly but steadfastly resisted all the petitions of the Polish nobility for a confirmation of their ancient privileges, till they threatened to form a confederation against him. Then he yielded,³ but in such general

¹It might be mentioned here, that, just before the present great European war, it was discovered that Vytautas was buried in the Cathedral of Vilnius with his crown. After this discovery the crown shortly disappeared from the coffin. Probably, Polish hands are responsible for its removal.

²Treaty of Brest Litovsk, March 23, 1446.

³Diet of Piotrkow, 1453.

terms as to make it of little or no value. Casimir's firmness had important political consequences. The nobility were impressed by his resolution, but they mistrusted him ever afterward as a pro-Lithuanian, and henceforth made it a point of honor to give him nothing gratis."¹

All the Lithuanian and Gudian nobility gathered at the Diet of Vilnius, January, 1446, and emphatically opposed Casimir's acceptance of the Polish crown, and then only permitted him to become King of Poland when it was promised that the provinces of Volhynia and Podolia would be returned to Lithuania, and that after the death of Casimir, the Lithuanians should choose their ruler without the intervention of Poles. This shows that if there had ever been a union up to this time, it was then entirely dissolved.

After the death of Casimir (1492), "the Lithuanians, in direct violation of the treaty of Horodlo, a month earlier, elected John Albert's younger brother, Alexander, their Grand Duke."²

POLES ELECT LITHUANIAN RULERS FOR POLAND'S THRONE

Alexander's reign was marked by wars with Moscovites, Tartars and the Teutonic Order. He was elected as King of Poland, October 4, 1501; died, 1506.

Ten days after the obsequies of Alexander, his younger brother, Sigismund, was unanimously elected Grand Duke of Lithuania. On January 24, 1507, he was crowned at Cracow, King of Poland.

To maintain the tie with Lithuania, the Polish politicians endeavored to prevent having a separate ruler for both states and seized every opportunity to gain this end. After the death of their King, they tried to declare the Lithuanian Grand Duke as their King, and thus keep Lithuania without her own separate ruler.

Sigismund seeing that the Lithuanians were not satisfied and were striving for their own separate ruler, although his sympathies were with them, through fear of Polish jealousy, he conducted secret negotiations with the Lithuanians, and in 1529, at the Diet of Vilnius, offered his son Sigismund Augustus for the throne of Lithuania. The Lithuanians accepted his offer and triumphantly declared Sigis-

¹Slavonic Europe, p. 15.

²Slavonic Europe, Bain, p. 41.

mund Augustus as Grand Duke of Lithuania, and in 1544 he became de facto ruler of Lithuania.

The Poles being abnormally jealous of Lithuanian liberty, and at the same time anxious to maintain relations, however slight, with Lithuania, after the death of their king, again elected a Lithuanian Grand Duke for their ruler (1548).

The Poles being placed in fear by constant Turkish attacks, forced their king to bind Lithuania closer to Poland; thus to have the Lithuanian power arrayed against the Turks. In 1551, Sigismund II sent the Polish chancellor to the Lithuanian Diet at Vilnius, to remind the Lithuanians of former "unions," and to invite them to the formation of a new and a closer one. The Lithuanians emphatically refused to consider any such invitation and asked the chancellor to tell the king that Lithuania wished to maintain her independence, and that he should not favor Polish chauvinistic ideas. At the same time the Lithuanians promised Poland their financial and military assistance against the Turks.

POLAND'S DESPERATE DESIRE FOR UNION

During the following years many conferences and Diets were called in both States. This was a result of Polish intrigues and desperate and persistent pressure on their King, who was also Grand Duke of Lithuania, to form a union with Lithuania. "In Poland itself, men were of one mind as to the desirability of a complete and absolute union; but the Lithuanian magnates obstinately opposed it. Only the fear of the Moscovite with whom they were always more or less at war, induced the Lithuanians to entertain the proposal at all. The project of a closer union was first debated at the Diet of Warsaw (November, 1563; June, 1564), to which the Lithuanians sent delegates. The discussions were warm on both sides and ultimately came to nothing; but the King judiciously prepared the way for future negotiations by voluntarily relinquishing his hereditary title to the throne of Lithuania."¹

The Poles particularly feared that Sigismund Augustus would leave no heirs to the throne, thereby extinguishing the Jagellon dynasty, and Lithuania, no more linked with Poland through the person of the same sovereign, might become ipso facto separated

¹Bain, "Slavonic Europe."

forever from Poland. It was understood by the Poles that, if Poland be left alone, she would become a secondary state, as she had been previous to her dynastic union with Lithuania. The Poles, desirous of avoiding at any price the decrease of their country, made all possible efforts to transform the dynastic union into a political one before the death of the last Jagellon. To this end they convoked several diets to impose the union under a new form. All the attempts of the Poles failed, thanks to the opposition of the Lithuanians, who wished nothing more than to dissipate once and for all any idea of a union with Poland. At the head of Lithuanian opposition was Prince Mikolas Radvila Juodasis (Nicholas Radzivill, the Black), the brother-in-law of King Sigismund Augustus, whose ability frustrated all the attempts of the Poles. But after his death in 1565, the Lithuanian opposition did not find an equally obstinate leader to face the Polish attempts.

Negotiations were reopened on January 10, 1569, at the Lublin conference. A Lithuanian memorial was presented by the Vice-Treasurer, Narusevicius (Narusevicz), in which the Lithuanians positively refused to go beyond a personal union. On the rejection of their memorial, the Lithuanian representatives, indignant at the illegal proceedings of the King and his Polish delegates, withdrew from further participation in the conference.

The Polish delegates, losing hope of absorbing all Lithuania at one time, decided to take it in portions. Concentrating all their pressure on Sigismund, they now requested him to annex the richest southern Lithuanian provinces of Volhynia, Podolia and Ukraine to Poland. The King, disregarding the fact that in the year previous to this conference he had relinquished his title to the throne of Lithuania, now took a decisive step. Assuming the role of ruler of Lithuania, and in spite of protests of Ostefijus Volavicius, Prince Cartoriskis, Prince Ostrovskis and Prince Visnevskis, the representatives of Podolia and Volhynia, he annexed these provinces to Poland. The Podolian representatives, however, refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Polish King, regardless of Polish threats to confiscate their property.

LITHUANIA'S LAST MEANS TO PRESERVE INDEPENDENCE

The Lithuanian delegates returning home decided to take decisive steps; resorting, if need be, to the sword against the Poles. But soon, to their pain, they learned that the Polish anarchical seed

sown in Lithuania had begun to take root. It was impossible to have the army ready in a short time. To save the name of Lithuania from disgrace the representatives, as a last resort, returned to the conference and violently protested against the annexation of any Lithuanian provinces to Poland.

Then the King of Poland called all the militia to arms (*popolita ruszenia*), to enforce the union. The Lithuanian representatives, to prevent the shedding of blood, were forced to comply with the Polish demands.¹ By this act of compulsion and duress it was supposed by Poland that a composite international person had been formed.

In the union of Lublin the Poles sought for themselves a satisfactory solution of the problem—still unsettled after more than a hundred years of strife. Mr. Phillips ("Poland"), reviewing all the attempts and failures by the Poles to form a union with Lithuania, further says: "They were finally amalgamated, in 1569, by the union of Lublin, and even then the union was an uneasy one."

This supposed union did not actually change conditions in Lithuania. The title of Grand Duchy, the Statute, the officials, the government, the treasury, and the army were retained. Even the Poles themselves endeavored, perhaps unconsciously, to sustain the separate boundaries of both states.

The detaching of Lithuanian provinces and the annexing of them to Poland, indicates that there was no real union between those two states. If there had been a union of any kind there would have been no necessity for the annexations.

The king tried several times to call the diet for final reforms in both states, but all his attempts were vain. Finally, in 1572, the Diet was summoned at Warsaw, but it did not bring the desired results. The Lithuanian delegates protested at not having the proper mandates bearing the seals of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and regardless of the King's protests to remain, they withdrew from the Diet.

The year 1572 witnessed the death of Sigismund II, the last ruler of the Jagellon dynasty. It marked the end of the dynastic tie between Lithuania and Poland.

¹Mr. Bain, "Slavonic Europe," says: "One relic of her former independence still remained to Lithuania. She retained her own separate dignitaries. Thus, to the very end, The Grand Hetman and the Vice-Hetman, the Grand Chancellor, etc., continued to officiate side by side with their colleagues of the crown."

STATUS OF THE TREATIES

It has been noted that there were many attempts between Lithuania and Poland to form several kinds of unions or alliances, and to ratify other treaties. Were they legal and binding? To find out the legal status of these treaties, it is necessary to observe closely the elements requisite to the formation of valid treaties.

The conditions which are essential to the validity of treaties are, that the parties (states) to the treaty must be independent to have international capacity to contract; the plenipotentiaries acting for the state must be duly authorized; the contracting parties must have freedom of consent in the agreements. "No constraint can be put upon the negotiators of the treaty by threats of personal violence, or in any way to prohibit their free action, without invalidating their acts."¹

Phillimore says: "The free reciprocal consent of both contracting parties, which is indispensable to the validity of a contract between individuals, is equally requisite for a treaty between states."²

Considering what has been said, it leads to the conclusion that—

(1) The union is an "agreement and conjunction of mind, spirit, will, affection, or the like." That it is an act uniting or joining two or more things into one; that the treaties between states are equal to a making of contract between two, or more, parties.

(2) That, to join two or more things into one, it is necessary that those things should be joinable. To make a legal and binding contract it is necessary that the minds of both sides should meet, or agree, on a certain point.

(3) That the party or parties cannot be forced by threats or other illegal means to enter into contract.

Therefore, do the stated facts in former pages mean that Lithuania was joinable with Poland, when resistance on the part of the Lithuanians was always strong? Was there a making of legal contract—meeting of two minds—when the first attempt to create a closer tie aroused such antagonism in the Lithuanian population? Of course not. There was no such thing as a meeting of two minds, and, therefore, there could be neither real nor permanent union between those two states.

¹Wilson, "International Law."

²Phillimore, "International Law," Vol. II, p. 75.

Although there was neither legal, morally valid, nor permanent union, nevertheless the historical facts reveal that, at times, there existed certain temporary treaties, brought on by the wave of time.

These treaties were the formation of a "personal union,"¹ and certain alliances which at times were formed for mutual protection from the invasion of Tartars and the Teutonic Knights, but which were in existence for a limited period, and then annulled by the Lithuanians.

The attachment of Lithuania to Russia dissolved all the ties with Poland, if before that time they had continued to exist.

REVIEW OF THE TREATIES

The following is a review of the several attempts, successes and failures in the formation of various unions.

It is impossible to rely on the treaties, but the closer observance of the historical events will reveal the true status of these unions, by showing the attitude of the population concerned, which is indispensable for the treaty-making power.

Dr. Wheaton writes that,² "The obligation of treaties, by whatever denomination they may be called, is founded, not merely upon contract itself, but upon those mutual relations between the two States which may have induced them to enter into certain engagements. Whether the treaty be termed real or personal, it will continue so long as these relations exist. The moment they cease to exist, by means of a change in the social organization of one of the contracting parties; of such a nature and of such importance as would have prevented the other party from entering into the contract had he foreseen this change, the treaty ceases to be obligatory upon him."

Dr. Westlake³ says that the terms upon which the different treaties exist, and the sentiments the populations concerned entertain with regard to them, are among the leading facts of the world in which statecraft has to move and act.

This review will confirm the facts shown in former pages con-

¹"A personal union is in existence when two Sovereign States and separate International Persons are linked together through the accidental facts that they have the same individual as monarch." Oppenheim, "International Law," Vol. I, p. 126.

²H. Wheaton, "International Law," p. 30.

³Westlake, "International Law."

cerning the sentiment of the people of Lithuania as to those treaties, and let this explain the validity of these treaties.

The first tie was formed in 1386, when Jagela, Grand Duke of Lithuania, married Jadwiga, the Polish Queen. But this concerned only *jus privatum*. It was then that the Polish politicians intended to use this marriage for the extension of their influence over Lithuania. This was checked by the Lithuanians when they forced Jagela to abandon the throne of Lithuania, and then chose Vytautas for the Grand Duke of Lithuania.

In 1392, a friendly agreement was made for the better resistance of a common foe. The Poles, not satisfied with such a weak agreement, forced their Queen, Jadwiga, to remind Vytautas of Jagela's supposed promise, made at his marriage with Jadwiga, to unite Lithuania with Poland, and, therefore, Lithuania obligated to pay an assessment to Poland.

This aroused the Lithuanians to the Polish intentions, and, to emphasize that Lithuania never had possessed anything in common with Poland, Vytautas summoned all the Lithuanian nobility to a conference where he was declared the King of Lithuania (1398).

Another treaty was made in 1413, when both states agreed to choose their rulers with the consent of both sides. This was a step towards a personal union, as the Polish intentions were to elect the same ruler for their throne and ipso facto maintain at least a personal union with Lithuania.

After the death of Vytautas, 1430, the Lithuanians, without Polish participation, elected Svitrigaila, Grand Duke of Lithuania, thereby destroying the agreement of 1413. In 1432, Sigismund, succeeding to the throne of Lithuania, renewed certain agreements made in 1401. But in 1440, by electing Casimir to the throne of Lithuania, the Lithuanians annulled the treaty of 1432.

This lasted until the year of 1447, when the Lithuanians permitted Casimir to accept the crown of Poland, thereby consenting to a personal union.

Casimir's death in 1492 brought annulment of the personal union, because the Lithuanians elected Alexander for their ruler, while John Albrecht ruled Poland.

In 1499 the Treaty of 1413 was again renewed by agreeing to aid each other in wars—Lithuanians with the Moscovites, Poles with the Turks and Tartars.

Polish politicians strove for a closer tie, and, in 1501, succeeded in electing Alexander for their King, thereby renewing the short-lived personal union. This was again nullified by the death of Alexander in 1506.

In October of the same year, the Lithuanians chose for their Grand Duke, Alexander's younger brother Sigismund. The Poles hastened to again renew the personal union by electing Sigismund for their King in December of the same year.

This union was again nullified by the election of Sigismund Augustus to the throne of Lithuania, who in 1544 became *de facto* ruler of Lithuania. After the death of the Polish King (1548), the Grand Duke of Lithuania was declared the ruler of Poland, and again a personal union was renewed.

In 1569, at the conference of Lublin, the Polish intention was to form a real union with Lithuania. But as has been noted, this was never accomplished. The Treaty which was formed at this conference, in fact, was even less than a personal union.

But looking from the legal side, it will be seen that all treaties at this conference were illegal and void, because some of the delegates from the Lithuanian provinces were threatened with the confiscation of their property if they failed to comply with the Polish requests. If the treaties were signed, it was done under duress, and, therefore, they were invalid.

None of the Lithuanian rulers gave an oath of allegiance to Poland. After the Poles elected John Albrecht as King, the Lithuanian ruler, Alexander, sent a congratulatory message as from one nation to a neighboring nation. This did not show any indication of submission to the newly elected King, which would have been shown had Lithuania been a province or vassal of Poland.

Many sincere writers are misled through an inability to discern the difference in the titles of Kingdom and Grand Duchy. In these early days the title was most important and the kingdom always preceded the Grand Duchy. But this did not mean that the sovereignty of the Grand Duchy should have been restrained or limited by the kingdom with which she formed an alliance, a personal union, or even a confederation.

LITHUANIA CONSIDERED AN INDEPENDENT STATE

After the conference of Lublin (1569), even though one ruler governed both, he was not chosen for both thrones at the same time. Usually, the Lithuanians were the first to invite him to the throne of Lithuania, or they recognized him later as Grand Duke of Lithuania.

Immediately after the death of Sigismund Augustus, the Lithuanians attempted to secure a separate ruler for their country. They invited Feodor, the son of John IV, the Czar of Moscow. The Czar, in place of his son, offered himself, but the Lithuanians refused to accept him as their Grand Duke.

Henry Valois was invited to the Polish throne. A Lithuanian representative, Christopher Radvilas, independently of the Poles, while in Paris, extended to Valois a separate invitation to the throne of Lithuania by presenting to him a document to this effect from the Diet of Vilnius. This invitation was a conditional one, namely: That he should not limit Lithuania's sovereignty, and that the Lithuanian provinces annexed to Poland should be restored to Lithuania.

Various international, commercial and political treaties were ratified apart from Polish sanction.

The third edition of the Lithuanian Statute, published in 1588 (nineteen years after the "union" of Lublin), on page 12, contains a clause strictly forbidding Poles to occupy any official position in Lithuania.

The Lithuanian money issued in the year 1623 (54 years after the conference of Lublin) on one side reads: "Sigismundus III Dei Gratia Rex Poloniae Magnus Dux Lituaniae." On the other side it says: "Soltdus Moneta Lituaniae." This tends to confirm the existence of Lithuanian independence even after the "union" of Lublin.

In the course of time, even the Polonized Lithuanian nobility realized the disaster and demoralization brought to Lithuania by the Poles, and on November 29, 1700, a conference was called at Vilnius, where the existing relations with the Poles were renounced categorically. It was resolved to endeavor by every possible means to return to Lithuania the glory of the days of Vytautas and Gedeminas. These documents were signed by Prince

Karol Radvilas, Chancellor of Lithuania; Prince M. Oginskis, Minister of Finance; Prince A. Oginskis, Commander-in-Chief of Samogitia¹.

Concerning the breach or termination of treaties, or their voidability, Dr. Wilson says that, "a treaty is voidable when,

(1) it is concluded in excess of powers of contracting parties,

(2) when it is concluded because of stress of force upon negotiators or because of fraud,

(3) when the conditions threaten the self-preservation of the state or its necessary attributes."² The following test of voidability is given by Hall: "Neither party to a contract can make its binding effect dependent at his will upon conditions other than those contemplated at the moment when the contract was entered into, and on the other hand a contract ceases to be binding so soon as anything which formed an implied condition of its obligatory force at the time of its conclusion is essentially altered."³

Revision of the annulment of the treaties with Poland will prove that the Lithuanians always acted in accordance with the principles of international law.

ANARCHY WAS THE RESULT OF THE UNION OF LUBLIN

Certain it is, that the union of Lublin cannot be called a "real union" between Poland and Lithuania. It was formed a sort of confederation, without any centralized administration. The joint executive was an elective king, paralyzed by diets, by government officials appointed for life, and by various confederations organized in different provinces. Anarchy raging in Poland corrupted the Lithuanian nobility, who thought of nothing except laying taxes on the people and undermining royalty. The peasants were oppressed by the nobility. Religious friction helped to bring anarchy to the front. The authority of the King was diminished. Some of the noblemen concentrated their thought on fattening their pocket-books only; others were striving to get hold of the

¹Narbut, "Historia Litwy."

²Wilson, "International Law."

³Hall, "International Law," p. 342.

reins of administration, and were almost equal to the feudal superiors.

The Poles endeavored to incorporate Lithuania into Poland, thereby arousing bitter antagonism among the Lithuanians. These facts encouraged the anarchy which was already raging in both states.

Some of the Lithuanian noblemen having an army of their own, with Prince Janusa Radvilas (Radzivil) at the front, made repeated though unsuccessful attempts to separate Lithuania entirely from Poland. But the gangrene of anarchy in Poland had gone too far. It was too late to be checked now; as a consequence Lithuania too had become infected.

During the time Saxon Augustus reigned (1733-1763), anarchy reached a state theretofore unknown. At his death the ruling faction turned towards Maria-Theresa and Catherine for mediation. Instead of suppressing anarchy, through their diplomatic intrigues, Frederick, Catherine and Maria-Theresa ignored the petitions of these two weakened states, and, instead, partitioned them amongst themselves, thereby ignoring the comity of nations and the principles of international law.

The first partition was in 1772; the second followed in 1792; and the last one in 1795, when greater Lithuania was attached to Russia, while the Prussian provinces, or Lithuania minor, went to Germany. The title of Grand Duchy of Lithuania, during the Vienna Congress (1815) was transferred to Russia, it passed from one Czar to another at each coronation, and it was officially used by the last Czar, Nicholas II.

RUSSIAN OPPRESSION

Catherine II, while ruling Lithuania, pledged herself to respect the laws of this new acquisition. She appointed a viceroy, who made his headquarters in Vilnius, the capital. The successors of Catherine followed her example until 1830, when persecutions commenced.

Lithuania was destroyed politically, divided into the Russian administrative districts of Vilna, Kovna, Grodna, Suvalki, Minsk, Mohilev, Courland and Vitebsk, was politically effaced from the map of Europe through the influence of Russian bureaucracy. The official use of even the name of Lithuania was prohibited by an

ukase in 1840, and replaced by the geographic name "Northwestern Province." The era of martyrdom then began for the Lithuanian nation. Russification was more and more accentuated. The principal stages of it were the transference of the University of Vilnius to Kiev; the suppression of the Statute of Lithuania (1848) and its replacement by the Russian code; the bloody repression of the revolutions, the exile and confiscation of the property of many Lithuanian landlords.

All of these violent measures together have done less harm to the Lithuanian nation than the prohibition of the use of the Roman alphabet in literature, which the Lithuanians had adopted in the 16th century through contact with western civilization. In place of the prohibited type, the government imposed the Russian alphabet (*grazdanka*) in order to be able to exercise a greater influence on the Lithuanian people. But the people preferred for forty years to content themselves with books printed abroad, and secretly imported to Lithuania under Russian domination.

It is impossible to estimate the moral loss caused to the Lithuanian people by this prohibition. The whole nation was condemned to mental stagnation during the second half of the 19th century (1864-1904), for it was without the press, that indispensable instrument for national development. It is not astonishing, therefore, that the Lithuanians, deprived of the means of affirming their existence, were no longer regarded as a nation.

But all oppressions failed to reach their objects. The severe oppressions and persecutions by autocratic Russia, particularly by the Muravieff (generally known in Lithuania as "hangman")¹

¹Muravieff was sent to Lithuania to suppress the Lithuanian activities for the emancipation in 1863. The "Frazer's Magazine," November, 1863, published a long article, written by an eye-witness, describing the brutalities of Muravieff in Lithuania. Following is an extract, which indicates how the Lithuanians received him:

"Mouraviev's character had long preceded him to the capital of his command. On reaching Vilna, on his first ride through the city, he came to a large market-place situated on the outskirts, where he was surprised by the sight of three gibbets, a large and two small ones, erected on a little eminence. He was not long in learning that this was intended for himself, and the two smaller ones for two of his friends. 'Good,' declared Mouraviev, 'Don't let them be taken down, they will come in useful by and by.' So the gibbets remained for some days, and, sure enough, they at last found occupiers whom their erectors little thought to see swinging there.

"Another greeting which he received was a proclamation offering 20,000 rubles for his assassination, which was afterwards increased to 100,000, as the accomplishment became more difficult."

governor of Lithuania, were in vain; these violent measures, aimed to annihilate the Lithuanian nation, produced contrary results; they reawakened the national consciousness in the people of Lithuania.

In 1883 there appeared at Tilze (Tilsit, in Lithuania Minor) the patriotic Lithuanian journal "Ausra" (Dawn), founded by the great Lithuanian patriot Jonas Basanius. This periodical was secretly imported into Russian Lithuania and distributed among the population to nourish their starving Lithuanian souls.

The national propaganda in Lithuania rapidly grew stronger. "Ausra" was soon followed by several other newspapers, such as "Varpas" (The Bell), "Ukininkas" (The Farmer), and, in spite of the severest persecutions by the Russian authorities, were spreading more and more until they penetrated into nearly every corner of Lithuania. These papers were read by every Lithuanian, and were passed from one to another until they wore out. In such a manner the Lithuanian people for forty years kept burning the spark of national spirit, and fought obstinately the many futile attempts of the reactionary Russian government to enforce the Russian alphabet in Lithuania and thereby pave the way for more thorough Russification.

Space does not permit an enumeration here of the most brutal acts of oppression directed against the Lithuanian nation. But, it seems, that what has been said above should suffice to give a general idea of the difficulties with which the Lithuanians were confronted. The people, in despair, attempted to escape from these persecutions; they had to leave their native country in great numbers to seek liberty on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. For this reason, during the second half of the 19th century, over half a million of them emigrated to the United States of America.¹

CULTURAL WORK WAS PROGRESSING

Although oppressed and persecuted, the Lithuanian people gave proof of their activity in the cultural domain. According to the census of 1897, at the very period when the printing of Lithu-

¹Enjoying the liberty of this adopted country, they have created numerous fraternal organizations and published many books and various periodicals through which they maintained the national tie with their mother country.

Concerning the Lithuanians in the United States, a long article was published in the "Charities" magazine, December 3, 1904, by A. Kaupas.

anian newspapers and books was vigorously forbidden, the Lithuanians held first place among the various peoples in the Russian Empire in the percentage of literates.¹

In 1904 the stupid ukase prohibiting the use of the Lithuanian alphabet was abolished and the Lithuanians, profiting by this situation, doubled their scientific and literary activities. They established the Lithuanian Society of Sciences (*Lietuviu Mokslo Draugija*) in 1907, in order to bring together Lithuanian savants.

This society, by scientific researches, made collections of ancient articles and thus built the foundation for the Lithuanian National Museum at Vilnius, but the work was interrupted by the outbreak of the war. It has also published numerous scientific works, especially on ethnographic and linguistic subjects. In 1914 this organization had 700 active members; its president is Dr. Jonas Basanias, one of the promoters of the national revival.

The Society of Fine Arts (*Lietuviu Dailes Draugija*) contains a great many artists, some of whom have acquired great fame outside of their country. Ciurlianis, Zmuidzinavicius, the sculptor Rimša, and several others may be mentioned.

The paintings of M. K. Ciurlianis united the Lithuanian national style and composition of colors with the modern school of the impressionists and the symbolists. Death claimed the famous painter in 1912.

During the period of half a score of years, hundreds of thousands of books have been published, while about fifty reviews and daily papers have sprung into existence, of which the most widely circulated are "Viltis," "Lietuvos Zinios," "Draugija," "Saltinis," "Vienybe," "Lietuvos Ukininkas."²

In order to facilitate the development of public instruction, the Lithuanians have founded several societies like "Saule" (The Sun), at Kaunas, which, through the medium of its 60 branches, has created hundreds of primary schools, popular libraries and reading rooms for the people. This society has a Normal School which prepares teachers of both sexes for its primary schools; one commercial and three secondary schools. "Saule" owes its pros-

¹Lithuanians, 52.01 per cent; Russians, 29.38 per cent; Poles, 34.78 per cent.

²There are about thirty periodicals in the Lithuanian language published in the United States, and three in England, several newspapers being published in East Prussia.

perity to its president, the great Lithuanian patriot, Mgr. C. Alsaukas.

The society "Ziburys" (The Torchlight), which has 57 branches in the district of Suvalki, has the same object as "Saule." This organization supports numerous schools and circulating libraries in the villages, also a college for young ladies at Mariampolis. Its president is Fr. Gustaitis. The society "Rytas" (The Morning), directed by Fr. Steponaitis, has for its object the development of public instruction in the district of Vilnius and Gardinas (Grodna).

The society of "St. Casimir," founded by the eminent patriot, poet and Lithuanian scholar, Mgr. A. Dambrauskas, has rendered the country great services in the development of public instruction and in the literary revival of the country. It has published thousands of books, scientific as well as popular, and published several newspapers and reviews, such as "Draugija," "Vienybe."

The society "Blaivybe," which promulgates ideas of temperance among the masses, was also established. This society spreads among the people instructive books as well. Its membership numbers over 50,000, and about several hundred branches in the various parts of the country. The president of this society is Rev. F. Galdikas.

We have mentioned here only the better known cultural organizations, but others of less importance also exist.

ECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS

The Lithuanians did not forget to organize and develop the economic forces of their country. First, taking into account the character of the country, they have created several agricultural societies, such as "Ukininku Bendrove," "Zagre," "Ukio Rateliai," and many others. These societies, among other things, have for their object to give the peasants practical instruction in agriculture to facilitate the buying of agricultural implements, artificial fertilizers and seeds, and to improve the breeds of cattle.

As the industries of Lithuania are not greatly developed, the industrial organizations are not numerous. Nevertheless, we may mention the association "Vilija" at Vilnius, for the construction of agricultural machines and utensils, "Birute," at Siauliai, a society for the manufacturing of marmalades and candy, and several others.

Commerce has been chiefly in the hands of the Jews, but lately, the Lithuanians have succeeded in concentrating a great deal of it in their own hands.

The preferred form for commercial organizations is the co-operative one. One finds them in nearly every hamlet. The financial associations are frequently found under the form of mutual credit societies and there are over a hundred of them.

There are several professional societies, such as societies of artists, of literary men, of students; also of working men, of young girls, etc.

It should not be forgotten that all these societies, as well as public and social life in Lithuania, have to develop under extremely unfavorable circumstances, as the reactionary Russian government has done much to discourage and retard them. In order to obtain permission to organize any kind of society, it was necessary to surmount a thousand difficulties. Societies, the foundation of which had been authorized, depended entirely on the good pleasure of the "tchinovniks" (Russian officials), and ran the risk every day of being ended. Once ended, the society was resuscitated under another name. There are societies which have been several times suppressed, and which have again reappeared under the cover of other names.

LITHUANIANS UNDER GERMAN DOMINATION¹

A general statement will suffice to disclose the conditions in that part of Lithuania—known as East Prussia—which, after the partition of the State of Lithuania, fell under the domination of Germany. This territory is much smaller and the Lithuanian population was less numerous than the one under the government of Russia.

The Lithuanian language and the customs of the people at first were tolerated by the German government. At Karaliaucius (Koenigsberg) University a chair was established for the Lithuanian language and literature. A scholarship prize was offered to the Lithuanian youth who happened to be too poor materially to pursue higher education.

¹Prof. J. Gabrys, "A Sketch of the Lithuanian Nation." Paris, 1914.

Otto Kessler, "Die Baltenländer Und Litauen." Berlin, 1916.

W. St. Vidunas, "La Lituanie dans le passe et dans le present," Geneve, 1917.

Although Prussian Lithuania did not enjoy a complete autonomy, nevertheless she had privileges—at the commencement of German rule over her territory—which permitted her to develop comparatively freely her national individuality. This “freedom” was not enjoyed very long, for, with the rise of German power, the oppression of the Lithuanian people increased. The more Prussia enlarged her power, the more aggressive she became.

Bismarck was the one to inaugurate the policy of extermination of the Lithuanian race in Germany. This policy was continued by his successors. It was then that the political and intellectual growth of the Lithuanian people in Prussia was almost choked, because it was being covered by the Prussian spiked helmet.

The Lithuanian language was excluded not only from schools, where the use of it was severely prohibited, even as a means of explanation to the Lithuanian children, but also prohibited in the Lithuanian Protestant Churches and replaced by the German tongue. There was no place for the Lithuanian language in public establishments, not even interpreters were kept, and the Lithuanian peasants having any transactions with officials had to learn the German language before attempting the settlement of their affairs. The local authorities (German) of Tilze (Tilsit), Klaipeda (Memel) and Gumbine districts, which were inhabited mostly by the Lithuanians, used every available means to Germanize as completely as possible the Lithuanian population.

The German government has not concurred in the opinion of the great philosopher Emanuel Kant, who said 110 years ago:

“Lithuania, having a loyal character, deserves the protection of the State. She must be preserved, for her tongue possesses the key which opens all the enigmas not only of philology, but also of history.”¹

LITHUANIA AND THE GREAT EUROPEAN WAR

The armies of the present European war overran Lithuania while she was earnestly engaged in cultural work and intent upon realizing her liberation from the German and Russian yoke. Lithu-

¹A preface to the “Grammatik der Litauischen Sprache,” by F. Kurschat, written by Emanuel Kant.

ania witnessed the first meeting and engagement between the Russian and German armies.

At the end of 1914, and the beginning of 1915, the entire country became the bloody arena of many horrible struggles of two great armies.

While Germany was gaining the upper hand and forcing the Russians to fall back, the retreating Russian army tried to destroy everything of value in Lithuania, in order that Germany would not profit by its capture. The people were forced to abandon their beloved country and accompany the retreating Russian armies.¹

In this way two hundred thousand Lithuanians parted with their homes and all of their property, and were sent to various parts of Russia, some of them as far as the Ural Mountains and Siberia.

In 1915 practically the whole of Lithuania was already occupied by German armies. What the retreating Russian armies did not destroy the invading Germans confiscated and sent to Germany.²

On account of the war, Lithuanians had to sustain not only great material losses, but moral and physical as well.³

The country, which was reviving, beginning to flourish and preparing to throw off the yoke of foreign domination, has now been laid waste. About one-quarter of the population, mostly the working class, is in absolute want. There is no way to provide

¹"Pro Lithuania," a journal published by the Lithuanian Information Bureau at Lausanne, Switzerland, Nos. 1-6, 1915-16, printed several articles by eminent journalists vividly describing the plight and sufferings of the Lithuanian refugees who were scattered throughout Russia.

²"The New York Times," August 13, 1916, published a long and interesting interview with the members of the American-Lithuanian Mission, which, in the beginning of 1916, was sent to Lithuania to investigate conditions and organize relief for the war stricken people of Lithuania. The Mission returned August 9, 1916.

The report of this Mission was of a very startling nature, and if not for the documents which they possessed it would have been incredible. The members of the Mission openly charged some German officials, as well as Poles from Posen—West Prussia—acting as German gendarmes, and also the Polish Nationalist party, with efforts to use the present lamentable moment of the Lithuanian people to annihilate them. It shocks humanity with the charges that even the funds collected abroad for the war sufferers are used for Polonization of the unhappy children of Lithuania.

³"The Current History Magazine," March, 1918, published a long and interesting article on German atrocities in Lithuania.

for them, for there is no work. These people are kept alive only by what others can spare them. They live in the evacuated trenches or dugouts, because many of the towns and villages are in ruins. Such cities as Siauliai, Naumestis, Tytavenai are but heaps of ashes. Twenty-five historical and beautiful churches, some of them hundreds of years old, were razed to the ground.

At the beginning of the war there were over 500,000 Lithuanians in the Russian army. Others are with the French and British forces. Approximately 25,000 are serving in the United States army. Thus, side by side with the Allies, the Lithuanians are fighting for democracy. They shed their blood with the hope that the cause of their mother country will be recognized at the impending Peace Congress.

For all the injuries and injustices brought down upon their country, the Lithuanians want no other recompense than the recognition of their inherent right to be free and independent in their own country. They ask nothing that is not rightfully theirs. They ask for the right to live as an independent nation. They ask for the right to mould their own destiny. For they desire only that they may have the opportunity to carry on the work of culture in their native land and to contribute thereby to the assurance of lasting peace, as a nation enslaved and oppressed could not do.

THE LITHUANIANS NEVER CEASED DEMANDING INDEPENDENCE¹

Since the last partition of Lithuania (1795), when they were deprived of the last attribute of freedom, the Lithuanians have never given up their hope of restoring the independence of Lithuania, and every opportunity has been seized to further the cause. The Russian authorities were fully aware of the Lithuanian demands, and at times have even shown their intentions to grant some sort of freedom.

During the 19th century, although many attempts were made by the Poles to regain their freedom from Russia, it has never been Russia's intention to include Lithuania in the restored Poland.

¹See the following magazines: *Contemporary Review*, August, 1917; *The Edinburgh Review*, October, 1917; *The British Review*, July, 1915; *The Literary Digest*, July 24, 1915; *The Nation*, October 21, 1915; *The Outlook*, December 23, 1905; *The Round Table*, March, 1918.

Even the Russian revolutionary leaders in 1825 opposed Polish designs in Lithuania.

"The Poles, of course, demanded the frontiers of 1772, but Pastel declared definitely for the restoration of an ethnographical Poland only (not including, i. e., the Little Russian and Lithuanian elements)."¹

In 1815, during Alexander's stay at Warsaw, a Polish deputation, with Prince Oginsky at their head, pretending to be Lithuanians, went to him to ask in the name of the Lithuanians the annexation of the Lithuanian provinces to Poland. But this deputation was received by Alexander on condition that they should not so much as mention the annexation of the Lithuanian provinces to Poland much less the annexation of Lithuania proper.¹

As late as 1863 the Poles were forbidden by the Russian government to purchase real property in Lithuania.²

The Lithuanians did not at first take any drastic measures to recover their independence, but diplomatic negotiations were constantly in progress. Thus, in the autumn of 1810, several Lithuanian noblemen began negotiations for the creation of a Grand Duchy of Lithuania.³

In the course of the Napoleonic wars a proposal was made to grant autonomy to Lithuania, but the indecision of Czar Alexander destroyed this proposal.

A Lithuanian army was maintained up to 1825, when Alexander ordered the uniforms changed.

When Napoleon crossed the Niemen and entered Lithuania on his way to Russia in 1812, his armies were joined by many Lithuanians.⁴ On entering Vilnius he was greeted by the Lithuanians, and immediately "the Lithuanian standard, representing a galloping horse, was floating above the walls of Vilna."⁵

Every movement for emancipation (except the Polish revolution of 1830) was joined in by the Lithuanians and pursued vigorously. In the uprising of 1863 most of the distinguished leaders were Lithuanians.

¹ A. Kornilov, "Modern Russian History," 1916.

² Morfill, "The History of Nations."

³ Phillips, "Poland."

⁴ "Modern History of Russia."

⁵ Morfill, "The History of Nations."

During the Russian revolution of 1905¹ a conference was called at the city of Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania; two thousand delegates representing all sections of Lithuania and all political parties were present. The following demands were made:

1. Autonomy of Lithuania with the Diet in her capital, Vilnius.
2. Compulsory education in the Lithuanian language
3. Re-establishment of the Lithuanian University at Vilnius.
4. Freedom of speech and the press, etc.

Only autonomy was demanded because it could not be expected that autocratic Russia would grant more at one time.

At the Letto-Lithuanian conference, Oct. 4, 1915, at Berne, Switzerland, a resolution was adopted demanding complete independence for Lithuania.

LITHUANIANS AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

June 27-29, 1916, at the International Conference, Lausanne, Switzerland, where 28 nations were represented, five accredited Lithuanian delegates were present—three from Lithuania and two from the United States of America. During a session of the Conference, a long Lithuanian declaration was read, which, after reciting the historical events in the Lithuanian State, presented the following conclusion:

“Relying on these bases, the Lithuanian nation with its own traditions, culture, national ideals and its individuality, believe that the only way a nation can survive is to acquire its own rights in all domains of life, and that the nation should direct its own destiny. The young Lithuania presenting the facts that for centuries Lithuania was an independent state, and now asking for her own rights, it is not her object to impose on the rights of those nations which were included and formed a part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

“The Lithuanian nation, which for centuries experienced so much disappointment, sees the guarantee of her future and the sufficient guarantee of her freedom only in the complete independence of Lithuania.”

In January, 1917, the Lithuanians living in the United States presented a declaration to all diplomatic representatives at Washington, the last part of which reads:

¹ Concerning the Lithuanian movement during the Russian revolution see “The Outlook.” December 23, 1905.

"At this critical moment when the world is called upon to solve a very important problem, namely, that of establishing a humane and assuring of a lasting peace; we, the empowered representatives of the Lithuanian nation, assume the privilege and duty of declaring that it is our sincere belief that the lasting peace can be established only if every living nation be given the right to determine her own destiny; therefore be it

"Resolved, That we, the empowered representatives of the Lithuanian nation, hereby declare and respectfully demand of the representatives of governments that will, at the termination of the war, negotiate peace:

1. That ethnographic Lithuania be united into one political body, and
2. That the United Lithuanian State be given an absolute political and economical independence."

This declaration was commended by the Lithuanians living in the United States, Great Britain,¹ South America, Switzerland and Lithuania.

Over 200,000 Lithuanian refugees in Russia who were forced to abandon their homes and flee to unknown countries to be scattered in all parts of Russia, called a conference at Petrograd, May 27, 1917, to consider, through their delegates, the situation of their mother country, Lithuania.

The following is a conclusion of the adopted resolutions:

BE IT RESOLVED 1. That the ethnographic Lithuania be established into an independent state, continually neutral.

2. The independence and neutrality of Lithuania must be guaranteed at the Peace Congress.

3. Lithuanian representatives must be admitted to the Peace Congress.

CONVENTION OF THE LITHUANIANS OF AMERICA

March 13-14, 1918, a convention of the Lithuanians residing in the United States of America was held at the Madison Square Garden Theatre, New York City. The 1,500 delegates, representing 1,000 organizations and colonies, assembled for the purpose of de-

¹Concerning the Lithuanians living in Great Britain, it is worth consulting "The Contemporary Review," August, 1917. Also "Pro Lithuania," January, 1916.

claring their determined will regarding the future of their mother country, Lithuania.

The following resolutions were adopted:

WHEREAS the Lithuanian Nation forms an ethnographic, cultural, economic and political inseparable body; and

WHEREAS the historic past of Lithuania and the present democratic development of the world reaffirms to the Lithuanian Nation the undeniable right to re-establish its own sovereign State; and

WHEREAS in the question of its ultimate political destiny the Lithuanian Nation maintains the right to follow its own national ideals; and

WHEREAS nations can successfully pursue their cultural courses and develop their economic resources only when in possession of their full political freedom; and

WHEREAS every nation has an inherent right to decide its own political destiny; and

WHEREAS the present war conditions have rendered the recognition of Lithuanian political freedom of international importance and therefore it becomes a subject to be deliberated upon at the international peace congress; and

WHEREAS only the international congress can give a true guarantee of the political sovereignty of Lithuania and not any warring nation striving now to enslave Lithuania; and

WHEREAS our highly esteemed President, Woodrow Wilson, adheres to the principle declared by him to the United States Senate, January 22, 1917, that

"No peace can last, or ought to last, which does not recognize and accept the principle that governments derive all their just powers from consent of the governed, and that no right anywhere exists to hand people about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were property."

THEREFORE, the Convention of the Lithuanians of America, after grave consideration of the present political situation of Lithuania, resolved,

I.—To respectfully request the President of the United States and the allied as well as the neutral governments of the world, to recognize the following demands:

1. That for the full and unhindered development of Lithuania it is necessary that Lithuania become a sovereign and in-

dependent democratic state within its own ethnographic boundaries, with the necessary economic corrections.

2. That the independence of Lithuania be assured by the international peace congress, and that delegates of Lithuania be given right to take part with full deliberative powers.

II.—That these resolutions be respectfully presented to our highly esteemed President, Woodrow Wilson, who has unceasingly championed protection of the rights of small and subject nationalities, and to all allied and neutral governments.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the President, Woodrow Wilson, and the nations of the world, be respectfully requested that the right to a separate and deliberative representation at the impending international peace conference be given to the representatives of the people of Lithuania.

LITHUANIA SEPARATED FROM RUSSIA

In 1915 Germany took the whole of Lithuania from Russia, established custom houses and fixed the boundaries between Lithuania, Germany and Poland. The people of this country are being called citizens of Lithuania.

The only tie that bound Lithuania to Russia was the Czar, as he had the title of Grand Duke of Lithuania, but now that he is deposed, ipso facto, Lithuania becomes separated from Russia. Russia is now a republic, and the hands of Lithuania are again freed.

In the latter part of 1917, Germany transferred the reins of government in Lithuania from the German military to the Lithuanian civil government.

The Lithuanian Diet was called Sept. 18-22, 1917, at the city of Vilnius; 215 delegates, representing all parts of the country and all political parties in Lithuania, assembled to confer concerning the destiny of Lithuania. The Valstijos Taryba (State Council) composed of 20 persons—representing all political parties—was organized. The following persons compose the Taryba:

Dr. Jonas Basanias, President of the Lithuanian Society of Sciences
Mykolas Birziskas, Director of the College of Vilnius.

Kazys Bizauskas, Instructor in College of Panevezis.

Saliamonas Banaitis, Member of Council of City of Kaunas.

Pranas Dovydaitis, Director of Gimnasia at Kaunas, and writer.

Steponas Kairys, Chief Engineer of the City of Vilnius.
Petras Klimas, writer.
Donatas Malinauskas.
Rev. Alfonsas Petrulis.
Stanislovas Narutavicius.
Rev. Vladislovas Mironas.
Dr. Jurgis Saulys, writer.
Canon Kazys Saulys.
Jokubas Sernas, Instructor in College of Vilnius.
Dr. Antanas Smetona, Lawyer. Editor of "Lietuvos Aidas," the official organ of the State of Lithuania.
Jonas Smilgevicius.
Rev. Justinas Staugaitis, Publicist.
Aleksandra Stulginskas, Agriculturist.
Jonas Vailokaitis, Merchant.
Jonas Vileisis, Lawyer.

Although the Lithuanian National Council was officially recognized by Germany, its work was persistently hindered by the German Government. Meanwhile a Peace Conference between Russia and the Central Powers was approaching in which the Lithuanian question was most vitally involved. Inspired by the fear of a partitionment of Lithuania, the Council December 11, 1917, approached the German Government for assistance in re-establishing an independent Lithuania. This request was seized upon by Germany as a pretext for demanding military, railway customs and currency conventions, demands which the Council refused. This resulted in postponing the date set for the Declaration of Independence of Lithuania—January 8, 1918. But on February 16, 1918, despite German opposition the Lithuanian Council formally proclaimed Lithuania an independent State and assumed the official responsibilities of the new state.

Feb. 12, 1918, the Supreme Lithuanian Council in Switzerland, which is safeguarding the foreign interests of Lithuania, has sent to all belligerent and neutral nations having a diplomatic representative in Switzerland, the text of a declaration adopted by the Taryba of Lithuania at Vilnius, proclaiming the re-establishment of the independent status of Lithuania with Vilnius as capital.

The declaration states that despite all oppressions of the past, the Lithuanian people have preserved their nationality and strength, and they now solicit the recognition of Lithuanian independence by the other nations of the world. The delegation from the Council was received by all diplomatic representatives.

March 11, 1918, again, a Lithuanian delegation from Vilnius called upon the German Chancellor, Count von Hertling, to ask the recognition of the independence of Lithuania.

On March 14th, Germany replied to Lithuania's repeated requests for recognition of her independence by making her recognition dependent upon the Lithuanian agreement to certain military, customs, railway and currency conventions.

As soon as these German intentions became known in the United States of America, the Lithuanians residing in this country, numbering about 750,000, forwarded to the Department of State and the United States Senate at Washington the following memorandum-protest, signed by all Lithuanian organizations in this country and also by individuals.

The following is a text of the protest:

WHEREAS the Imperial German Government has publicly announced the intention to make Lithuania an integral part of the German Federation—which really would mean the annexation of Lithuania—and to impose on the people of Lithuania, already severely looted by Germans, a part of the enormous war expenses; and

WHEREAS we, the undersigned Lithuanians and representatives of the Lithuanian organizations in the United States of America, know the true desires of our brethren voiced by them on many occasions and demanding, in no uncertain terms, the complete political independence of Lithuania; and

WHEREAS the Lithuanians residing in the United States, through their duly elected delegates in convention assembled, in the City of New York, on March 13th and 14th, 1918, declared and proclaimed by solemn resolution the patriotic aspirations and true national desire that the independent Lithuanian nation, free from foreign domination, be re-established, and that the Lithuanians shall stand united in their support of the principles laid down by the President in his messages to the Congress; and

WHEREAS the claims, as enunciated by the Imperial German Government, are tending towards the political and national suppression and economic exploitation of Lithuania, which tendency is, and will be, most bitterly resented by the Lithuanian people in Lithuania and abroad.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, That the Lithuanians of America

hereby express their solemn protest against this or similar attempts on the part of the German Government to make Lithuania a part of her territory, and they further declare that the domination of any sort in Lithuania by Germany or any other foreign power, is repulsive to the sentiments of every Lithuanian, and will be opposed to the utmost of their capacity.

March 24th, the deputation of the Taryba of Lithuania again called upon the German Chancellor, requesting the recognition of Lithuania as an independent state.

Replying in the name of the German Government to the Lithuanian deputation, Von Hertling, after a brief prelude, mentioning the declaration of Dec. 11, 1917, and also reminding the Lithuanians of the "alliance" and confederation with Germany, about shouldering a part of the German war debt, expressed that "we hereby recognize Lithuania as free and independent."

But quickly following this recognition Germany is attempting to impose upon Lithuania conditions wholly incompatible with her status as an independent nation, and utterly repugnant to the Lithuanian people. To the ultimate and inevitable victory of the Allies must Lithuania look for the guarantee of her permanent independence and international recognition as a sovereign state.

SUMMARY

The contents of this booklet present the following conclusions:

1. The Lithuanian race is the aborigine of the territory it occupies.
2. Lithuania once was the greatest State in Europe and rendered signal services to European civilization.
3. The neighboring States systematically and persistently strove to overthrow the liberty of Lithuania; employing religion as the instrument for better accomplishment; and only after four hundred years did they succeed in planting the seed of anarchy in Lithuania.
4. Only a personal union once existed between Lithuania and Poland, and at the first opportunity it was annulled by the Lithuanians.
5. There has never been a real union between these two States. At the conference of Lublin, a sort of confederation was formed, much against the will of Lithuania. The King of Poland had no right to act at that conference as the Duke of Lithuania, to compel

the representative to take the oath of allegiance and annex the Lithuanian provinces to Poland, because a year previous to this conference he had relinquished the throne of Lithuania. In most of the treaties with Poland there was no *pacta publica* only *jus privatum*.

6. During the partition of Poland and Lithuania, all relations and ties, if any existed, were dissolved.

7. Lithuania has never been conquered by Russia; only attached, never extinguished, because the Russian Czar had the title of Grand Duke of Lithuania, and transferred it to others at each coronation—they used it officially.

8. The deposition of Czar Nicholas II ipso facto again frees Lithuania. Lithuania's declaration of its independence by the State Council, and, later, the recognition of the independence by the German Government, although partial and unsatisfactory, make the question of Lithuania an international one, which must be finally settled at the termination of the war, by all nations participating in the Peace Congress.

9. The Lithuanian active participation in this war by contributing about a million of her sons to the Allied armies, and possessing a self-government, ought to entitle her to a representation at the Peace Congress.

10. In spite of systematic Germanization, Polanization and Russification, Lithuania has succeeded in retaining her language, customs, national life and spirit.

11. Notwithstanding severe oppressions and persecutions, the Lithuanians have established educational, political and economic institutions and are fully prepared for self-government, and for the circle of the Family of Nations.

12. For the assurance of a permanent peace to the world, it is necessary that the organized nations—nations possessing characteristics herein described—be admitted to the Family of Nations.

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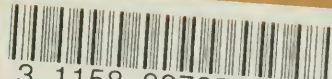
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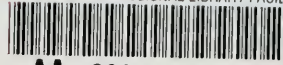
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